

Amendments to the Claims

The current listing of the claims replaces all previous amendments and listings of the claims.

1. (Original) A siding board for clapboard boarding that is employed in a clapboard boarding structure in which a plurality of siding boards are fastened to a framework of a building such that lower side portions of upper siding boards are overlapped frontward of upper side portions of lower siding boards,

wherein the siding board is a ceramic type siding board, the siding board comprising:

vertical joint grooves on a designed surface thereof,

lower edges of a lower side portion formed at different heights with
boundaries of the vertical joint grooves,

a rear surface stepped portion formed on the lower side portion, which has
been obtained by notching a rear surface of the siding board, and

an upper end surface of the rear surface stepped portion formed to extend in
a substantially straight line in lateral directions.

2. (Original) The siding board for clapboard boarding as claimed in
Claim 1, further comprising:

an engaging groove formed at the upper end surface of the rear surface stepped
portion, which has been obtained by notching the upper end surface; and

engaging notches formed at the upper side portion, which have been obtained by
notching the designed surface of the siding boards;

wherein the engaging groove is configured to engage with upper-board engaging portions of fastening members for fastening the siding board to the framework, and

wherein the engaging notches are configured to engage with lower-board engaging portions of the fastening member.

3.-5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) A clapboard boarding structure in which a plurality of siding boards are installed to a framework of a building such that lower side portions of upper siding boards are overlapped frontward of upper side portions of lower siding boards,

wherein the siding boards are ceramic type siding boards, each of the siding boards comprising:

vertical joint grooves on a designed surface,

lower edges of a lower side portion formed at different heights with boundaries of the vertical joint grooves,

a rear surface stepped portion formed on the lower side portion, which have been obtained by notching the rear surface of the siding boards, and

an upper end surface of the rear surface stepped portion formed to extend in a substantially straight line in a lateral direction; and

wherein each of the upper side portions of lower siding boards is disposed at the rear surface stepped portion formed on each of the lower side portions of upper siding boards.

7. (Original) The clapboard boarding structure as claimed in Claim 6, wherein the siding boards are fastened to the framework of the building by fastening members, each of the siding boards comprising:

an engaging groove formed at the upper end surface of the rear surface stepped portion, which has been obtained by notching the upper end surface upwardly, and

engaging notches formed at the upper side portion, which have been obtained by notching the designed surface;

wherein each of the fastening members comprises a base plate portion that is fixed to the framework, a supporting portion rising frontward from the base plate portion, an upper-board engaging portion upwardly bent from a front end of the supporting portion, and a lower-board engaging portion downwardly bent from the front end of the supporting portion, and

wherein each of the upper-board engaging portions is engaged with the engaging groove of the upper siding boards and each of the lower-board engaging portion is engaged with the engaging notches of the lower siding board.